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NO. 21.

## Maine Farmer.

N. T. TRUE, Editor.  
S. L. BOARDMAN, Editor.

Our Home, Our Country, and our Brother Man.

### Adaptation of Manures to Soils and Crops.

Manure has been written on the subject of manures within the last thirty years. All kinds of manures have been analyzed, as well as all vegetables, and the soils in which they grow. Theoretically, it would seem as though the whole subject had been exhausted in a chemical point of view. But fine spun theories, and delicate analyses will not obviate the common sense, practical view which is the result of experience alone.

In the first place, we have learned that manure must be in a state of solution before it becomes food for plants. There are no open mouthed vessels in the roots of plants as many suppose, but every avenue to the internal structure of a plant has a membranous covering through which the liquid manure must pass. Hence the fact that manures must be completely decomposed as well as in a state of solution. If a vegetable or animal manure is left to decompose completely, it resolves itself principally into carbonic acid, water, and ammonia, which pass off in the form of gas, leaving a residue of the various mineral salts. If the manure be kept in mass and does not ferment too rapidly, the gaseous elements will be largely absorbed by the residue. Hence, old and well decomposed manures will have all the elements in a semi-soluble condition.

Manures that are designed for the early stages of vegetation must be in this condition. The only essential difference between old and new manure is the difference in their time of action. We plow into the soil a quantity of green manure for the crop of corn during the latter part of summer. We put into the hill a shovelful of old manure, when we have it, for the early condition of the crop. We use our old manure for wet land. We use lime, ashes, phosphate of lime, guano, and similar mineral manures for the grain, and corn, and fruit crop, because these elements enter largely into the composition of the plant. We find by experience, that plaster does well with potatoes and clover on dry land, though it may perplex us to know why, in our present state of knowledge.

We have thought that not attention enough was paid to the age of manures. We are firm believers in a heap of well rotted manure for a greater proportion of our crops than is generally practiced. One of the handsomest crops of corn we have ever raised and ever saw, was on land that had been turned over after a heavy crop of clover was cut, and when the ground was full of large clover roots, planting with potatoes without manure except plaster, the first year, and the next year with corn on manure two years old. In stacking the manure, refuse salt and plaster had been mixed with it, so that it cut about as agreeably as old cheese. We often practice on a small scale in the garden, what we do not incline to do in the field. This is rather from the force of habits acquired from our fathers. We know that many successful farmers who depend almost entirely on the present year's manure for their present crops often succeed well. Their land may be adapted to this condition of things, though it is not certain but they would be still more successful with the course we here propose.

The whole subject of manures requires much good judgment in their application. To know how much is necessary for a crop, and how much for the land you cultivate generally, is all important to every farmer. As the time is near at hand when the manure heap must receive special attention, it would be well to make a careful estimate of the amount of manure you have on hand, and the extent of ground you can profitably cultivate with it. We shall have something more to say on the subject ere long.

### A Chapter on Hints.

Much of our knowledge is derived from the briefest hints which are often received in a most unexpected manner. The most valuable inventions have been the result of a casual remark or observation. The drain tile was derived from a hint of a gardener. The steam engine was said to have been hinted at by the steam from a tea-kettle, while the valves were made to work by machinery from the hint given by the boy who tended them and made them work by a string attached to the machine in order that he could play.

If we notice the manner in which we read an agricultural paper, we shall find that we catch a hint here and a hint there, and we may think ourselves abundantly rewarded if we can find one good hint a week in that direction. There is another way in which we receive hints, and that is directly from nature. A farmer has heard some new method of managing his affairs which he thinks an improvement over the old method, and he immediately writes it out briefly for the Farmer, and his neighbors all receive the benefit of it. We never go into a mechanic shop of any kind without catching some new hint worth remembering. Some apparently unimportant remark is sometimes made in the presence of a boy. It is a hint to him. He catches at it, and his whole future course for life is shaped by it. But few of the important events of our lives are made up from mature deliberation. It is quite as likely to be the result of a hint caught hold of in a second of time, while we make the deliberation afterwards. We are a great believer in hints, and almost any one may be valuable if rightly improved. There is said to be a best way for doing everything, and we most generally ascertain the best way from some hint which we receive from others. Hence the advantage of visiting the operations of the man who is successful in business and collecting such hints as may aid us in our labors in the same direction. Neighbor Jones says that he always visits his prosperous neighbor over the way every winter, just for the purpose of catching something new, or, in other words, of catching some valuable hints about farming, and this is one secret of neighbor Jones' success in farming. He argues in this way: "If my neighbor can cut a sure and a half ton of hay to the acre, and raise a sure crop of corn every year, there is no reason why I should not do as well as he." This is where neighbor Jones is right.

### "The Holmes Library"—A Word of Explanation.

As a wrong impression has obtained in the minds of many in regard to our proposition relating to the "Holmes Library" for the benefit of the State College of Agriculture, it may be well to correct it at once. Many have supposed that the fund we propose to raise is to purchase the private library of the late Dr. Holmes for the use of the College. This is not so. Dr. Holmes—generous soul that he was—never accumulated much of a library. During his life he got together a goodly number of books, but with them as well as his money, his labor, his advice, he was remarkably liberal; when by his liberality with anything he possessed, he could assist or contribute to the wants of his brother man. Many of his books were loaned and never returned, and many given away to those who were self-sufficient enough to take advantage of his benevolence and ask him for them. We hope many of these will be gathered together and placed in the library of the College. What an interesting and valuable feature it would be! In the library of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, is a small case with a glass door, in which are fifty or sixty old and badly worn volumes, over which is the following—"THE LIBRARY OF SMITHSON." It is one of the great objects of curiosity to whoever visits the Institution, although the books cannot be taken from the case. We really hope enough of these stray volumes from the good Doctor's library may be gathered together to form the nucleus of a noble and valuable collection for the wants of our proposed Industrial School.

The fund we propose to raise is to purchase a library for the State Agricultural and Mechanical College or School, to forever bear the name of the "Holmes Library." The sum necessary for this purpose has been estimated at five thousand dollars. Less than fifty cents from each subscriber will do it. We have no doubt that the Farmers of Maine, shall not this sum be raised within the present year.

Several of the Trustees of the State Industrial College (at their recent sitting in this city) spoke in terms of high favor of this plan and commended it as a most worthy manner of keeping in remembrance the memory and virtues of him whose name it will bear. In this connection we copy the following from a letter from M. Seavey Esq., of Portland: "You may count on receiving five dollars from me whenever the money is needed; and whenever the time arrives for active effort I will do all I can in this city to help obtain subscriptions. I can truly say that I have rarely met a man in the whole course of my life, for whom I have felt an equal degree of regard and brotherly love, and I certainly know of no one whose memory is more worthy of the respect and esteem we desire to bestow upon it."

### The Vegetable and Animal Kingdoms.

The simplest organized plant is composed of cells. Lay a row of egg shells side by side and we have an idea of the simplest form of a vegetable. A single cell is then the simplest form of organization known to us. This cell has the power to double itself and thus another cell is formed. The most complicated vegetable and animal substances are composed of cells.

Akin to this simple form of structure in plants, may be seen a similar one in the lowest form of animal creation. Starting with a single cell, it has the power of doubling and multiplying itself till it forms a shagreened, jelly-like mass, composed of cells. It has no stomach, no form of circulation, in fact, it has no distinct organs whatever. It receives its food in one part of itself as well as in another. So it is with its respiration and circulation.

Thus, when we examine the lowest forms of vegetable and animal matter, we shall find them composed of simple cells with power to reproduce themselves. From this starting point, we gradually ascend to the most complicated structure of vegetable and animal creation. Thus Nature's laws which are obscure to us when not understood, appear the simplest possible when fully comprehended.

### Harrowing.

Great improvement has been made within a few years among good farmers in preparing the ground for a crop. The thorough mixing up of the soil, and its careful pulverization, are of great importance. Among the instruments introduced is that of the ox cultivator. On green sward plowed land no better instrument has been devised. It is far better than any harrow in leveling the surface, and in stirring up the soil, and in stirring up the surface soil. Let this be followed by the harrow, and the ground is in excellent condition for a crop, other things being equal. Scarcely so much harrowing can be practiced on ground sowed to grain, or devoted to the cultivation of corn and potatoes. An extra harrowing often pays well, provided the ground be sufficiently dry. In speaking of the ox cultivator we have found that the common horse cultivator was far better than a harrow on green sward. Harrow once lengthwise the pieces, and then crosswise with the cultivator, and it prepares the ground finely for the last harrowing and for furrowing. We recommend the ox cultivator to all such as have not yet purchased one.

### Application of Superphosphate.

Messrs. Editors:—I am making Superphosphate of Lime after Professor Cameron's plan, for use this Spring, and as I am altogether unacquainted with the article, I wish to enquire of you what would be the best method of application for wheat, corn, potatoes, turnips, &c., and whether it would be best to sow broadcast, or for such crops as corn, potatoes and turnips, to scatter the superphosphate along the rows or drill it previous to putting in the seed. Would it be best to use the superphosphate alone or use some other manure with it? If used alone how much is necessary for an acre? H. H. M.  
Paradise, Annapolis City, N. S.

NOTE:—For wheat, Superphosphate should be applied broadcast upon the surface and lightly harrowed in. For corn, potatoes and other crops grown in hills or drills it should be placed directly in the hills. If you have plenty of dressing it will be a good plan to make an application of stable manure, and plow it under, manuring with Superphosphate upon the surface. If used alone two hundred pounds will be a good dressing for an acre.—E.S.

### State Agricultural College—Meeting of the Trustees.

The first meeting of the Board of Trustees of the "State College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts" was held at the State House in this city, on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week, twelve members being present.

The Board was organized by the choice of the following officers:  
President: Hon. Marshall Hamlin of Bangor.  
Vice President: S. L. Boardman of Bangor.  
Treasurer: Hon. Charles B. Barnes of Portland.  
The order of incorporation was adopted. A letter was read from Thomas S. Lang Esq., one of the Trustees, who was prevented from being present on account of sickness.

At the request of Gov. Cony, a committee was appointed to confer with the Governor and Council in relation to the sale of the land script for the benefit of the College. This is now on deposit with the Secretary of State, and it is thought at its minimum price, that its sale will realize \$150,000. Messrs. Hamlin, Lang and Martin were appointed a committee to select a site for the College.

A proposal having been made by Mrs. Beale, widow of the late Horace Beale Esq., to convey the "Togus House" property, near this city, to the State, for the purpose of the Agricultural College, the Trustees visited the same on Wednesday.

During the session of the Trustees, many important questions in regard to the location, establishment, and scope of the proposed institution, were discussed, all showing that the Board are earnest, working men, and have taken hold of the matter with that spirit of energy and understanding, which is a sure guaranty of success. An address is to be prepared by the Trustees appealing to the people of the State, for funds to assist in the establishment of the institution, and propositions for its location, are solicited. The Trustees are now properly empowered and authorized to take this matter in hand, and heretofore there has been no organized head to negotiate with parties who have made propositions for this purpose. All these are now under consideration. The next meeting of the Trustees will be held at Bangor.

### In Answer to Correspondents.

BOOK FOR MECHANICS.—"Scribner's Engineers' and Mechanics' Companion," a book full of useful and practical information for every young mechanic, enabling him to become intelligent and well informed in his profession is just the book needed. Its price is \$2.00 by mail. Address A. Williams & Co., Boston, Mass.

TOP DRESSING. (C. S. M.) You will find a dressing of ashes and salt an excellent application to use as you propose. Barley should be soaked or washed in a solution of salt and then mixed with ashes before being sowed.

"GEN. KNOX." We have had several applications for the engraving of this celebrated horse. Please address Thos. S. Lang, Esq., No. Vassalboro'.

### Reduction of Bones by Ashes.

The following article is from the pen of Prof. J. A. Nash, author of the "Progressive Farmer"—a work which no intelligent cultivator should be without.—E.S.

### On Poultry—No. 3.

#### THE BRAHMA.

There has been a great deal said and written upon the origin of the Brahma, and I believe it is still a disputed point with different breeders at the present time, whether it is a pure and distinct breed, or whether it is a cross between the Malay and Shanghai. My opinion is that it is a pure breed, and my reasons are, first: the form and build of the Brahma is very different from that of the Malay and Shanghai. The Brahma is of course, even when young, that of the Brahma fine and noble, and considered next to the Dorking for the table, and it would be impossible to get a fine, fine grained fowl from the crossing of such coarse grained fowls as the Malay and Shanghai. But let its origin be what it may, it cannot depreciate or add to the qualities which it is well known the Brahmas possess, and we will let it stand on its own merits. The Brahma has been quite a common fowl, that is, you see a great many people that have the "best Brahma ever seen," but in my travels I see but very few of them. The calling of a Brahma is not to make it so, but it requires no judgment and much experience to be able to decide the point. I actually think there is more inferior stock of this breed in the country than any other, if we except the white faced Black Spanish. The Brahma cock stands, when erect, thirty inches—some more than this, but this is considered a good height; large, strong, yellow legs, and well feathered. The color of the feathers is from a light greyish white, the tail black and short, the long flight feathers partly black, hackle feathers slightly pencilled, and he should have a pea comb. They are large in the body with full, broad, and weigh from seven to eleven pounds. The hens are of the same color as the cocks, but with short legs—the leg well feathered, large bodies, tall dark, and the hackle feathers more distinctly pencilled than the cock, and there is from six to nine pounds. I have seen a hen dress erect and one-half pounds net. They are the best, without exception, of any of the large breed of fowl; good layers and eggs very rich and of a light brown color. They are not of a roving disposition, and do as well shut up as any way, and are a very desirable fowl for our farmers. They are usually tough and hardy, living and thriving where most fowls would freeze. The cost of keeping them is not much more than common fowl, and when you compare the weight of the Brahma with a common fowl at the same age, the extra weight of the Brahma will reduce the cost of rearing and feeding so much that the profit is in the Brahma in the end. Let our farmers try some of the Dorkings and Brahmas; they will never keep the common fowl afterwards. These two breeds of fowl will dress out two or three times as much as the common fowl, and can be sold for being good layers (especially the Dorkings)—I do not know of better layers than these (I have) and being the very best fowls for the table there is known. The Dorking excels the Brahma in laying, and quality of flesh, but the Brahma has the advantage of extra weight.

#### WESTBROOK.

#### On Gardening.

Messrs. Editors:—I think and know that gardening is too much neglected by farmers generally. There is nothing raised on so small a piece of land that pays so well as the vegetables of a garden, and that many farmers may devote a quarter of an acre or more to a garden. With plenty of vegetables you save one-half of your beef and pork, and you will improve both in body and in purse. I sold green peas in pod, 4th of July last year, for three dollars per bushel; radishes for twenty-five cents per bushel; pumpkins for ten cents a piece; cabbages from twelve to seventeen cents a piece; best for one dollar per bushel. Our first object ought to be to get the earliest seed we can raise our own seed, for that which we purchase is often worthless. I planted my early peas March 27th, and sowed some tobacco seed at the same time. The spring here is quite forward. M. GREENOUGH.  
North Edgcomb, April, 1865.

### Agricultural Miscellany.

#### Cultivation of the Grape.

The following account of the mode of cultivating the grape is from C. M. Glidden of Ohio, who has succeeded wonderfully in obtaining large crops of grapes.

Mr. Glidden tells his vines grow—make all the wood he can coax them to do—and then he "feeds" them to make them produce fruit—feeds them every day during the season.

His ground is the hard clay soil of the Ohio river bottom. He makes it as rich as possible with stable manure, to the depth of 15 to 18 inches, mixing in lime to a considerable quantity, and sand enough to make the ground, after it is prepared, light and porous. His ground gives to the foot all the moisture like a sponge.

2 He digs a trench 3 1/2 feet deep by 3 1/2 feet wide, throwing the prepared earth on the other; and sets in the trench the posts for an arbor. In the bottom of the trench he puts a layer of manure from the slaughter house, to the depth of five or six inches, upon the bones he packs solid for 18 or 20 inches of stable manure, upon the top of which he puts the prepared earth, taken from the top of the trench in digging, and the clay from the bottom is spread over the surface of the ground.

3 He sets his plants. After that he never digs the ground, but applies all "feed" in a top-dressing.

4 In the case of bearing vines, every day when he does not rain the whole surface of the ground is freely sprinkled with water, from the time the grapes are formed until ripe. All the summer all his vines are fed with lime water, about two-thirds of a bucket full of lime to 50 gallons of water, and all the soap suds and all the dish water from the kitchen is fed to the vines. The heavy bunches are tied up with twine to support them.

5 He nips back the bearing branches, going over the vines about three times, to equalize their growth, let them grow no longer than eight or ten inches, and keeps them there.

6 He cuts out the bearing branches season by season, he cuts out the bearing branches season by season; the next year the bearing branches again shoot out at the same place. He then gets the whole surface of the ground a coating of manure, and sows on top of it clover.

7 The posts of his arbor (three or four inches square, planed and painted) are set about seven feet apart, the centre of the trenches being about an inch from the posts. The vines are trained in an arch high. Iron rods, round, one-fourth of an inch in diameter, run through the posts and along the top, about 15 inches apart, forming the sides and top of the arbor. The vines run across the arbor on the top of six or seven inches apart. In bearing, the blue sky overhead is scarcely to be seen for the bunches of blue grapes. As the sun sets and shines on the side of the arbor, it can be seen falling from the vines almost like rain.

8 No mother ever nursed her child with more unwearying and tender care than does Mr. Glidden his grapes. But they repay it all, all care bestowed.

9 Mr. Glidden's grapes never blight or rot; never fail!—Cincinnati Gazette.

#### Preparation of the Soil for Crops.

Advantage should be taken to stir the plow as early as the soil will admit. The deep winter's snow left on the ground free from frost, and in places where the water has run off, the soil will be in condition to work sooner than on heavy soils that are wet. By plowing dry portions of the field first, considerable time will be gained, so that when the wetter portions are ready to be plowed, the whole field will be in condition to be plowed at one time. Heavy soils should not be plowed when wet, because they bake, and the clods can not be broken up so fast. They should be plowed when in that condition of moisture to ensure mellowness and fine tilth.

A loose, well pulverized soil allows the air to circulate freely among its particles, and the roots of plants spread out their delicate fibres drawing their sustenance from a more extended surface than on lands that are plowed in such condition as to assume a compact form. Seed sown on a hard and compact soil can not be expected to produce other than a sickly and unthrifty growth of plants. The great fault of American farming is lack of thorough pulverization and culture of the soil. We have waited till now for the land for the seed, and then upon neglecting opportunities of culture until late in the season, and then perhaps bad weather necessitates further delay or the breaking up of the land when wet and unfit to be worked.

With oats, barley, spring wheat and rye, if sowed early on properly prepared ground, the yield will generally be larger and the grain heavier than late sowing. This will be borne out by the fact, and if there are exceptions they will be due to some peculiarity of the season which is not good economy to risk. When barn yard manure has been hauled to the field during winter to be plowed under, it will be better to plow it under in the fall, than to wait till spring. It should be borne in mind that a full crop on an acre is much more profitable than half a crop on two acres. The production of crops is not the chance matter that many suppose, but depends upon conditions of culture, which are not to be ignored.—Utica Herald.

#### The Agricultural Department.

The Editor of the Prairie Farmer has been to Washington, and taken opportunity to examine carefully the organization and operations of the Agricultural Department. In an article on the subject, he comes to the following conclusions: and the temperate but earnest manner in which they are expressed, will give them the greater weight.

"We think the usefulness of the Department has already been impaired by the criticisms on the present Commissioner by the agricultural press of the country—which has often been expressed in the most unmeasured terms, and with much show of reason, that it seems as though it should have some weight with the President at Washington, if deserved. Not fully knowing the facts of the case, and wishing to do the Department no harm, we have waited till now for the opportunity of a week spent in Washington, in free intercourse with many who are familiar with the workings of the institution, among them many members of Congress, (who would demand the removal of the present Commissioner, if they thought such a demand would avail anything) and from personal observations, we have been compelled to the conclusion that the Department can and ought to have a more useful and important position in the eyes of the public, and one more acceptable to the agricultural people of the country. There is now no concert of action between the Department and the agricultural press of the country, whatever. In fact it is all antagonistic. This should not be so. The papers can live and thrive without the Department, but the Department must be worthy and have the confidence and support of the agricultural press and the people, if it is to accomplish the good it ought to accomplish, and that the public have a right to expect."

#### Salt for the Garden.

Latterly some practical men have recommended the application of salt to gardens, either in autumn after the crops have been removed, or in the spring before or after digging for crops; and we have seen in New York, claim for salt manure, and it will effect all that is claimed for it. For years it has been established that salt hauled from the marshes overflowed by sea water, was far to be preferred as a manure to the salt hauled from the mines, and it is now found to fruit trees, especially the plum, where it has been very beneficial effect. The fruit-growers of New England and New York, claim for salt manure, and it will effect all that is claimed for it. For years it has been established that salt hauled from the marshes overflowed by sea water, was far to be preferred as a manure to the salt hauled from the mines, and it is now found to fruit trees, especially the plum, where it has been very beneficial effect. The fruit-growers of New England and New York, claim for salt manure, and it will effect all that is claimed for it. For years it has been established that salt hauled from the marshes overflowed by sea water, was far to be preferred as a manure to the salt hauled from the mines, and it is now found to fruit trees, especially the plum, where it has been very beneficial effect. The fruit-growers of New England and New York, claim for salt manure, and it will effect all that is claimed for it.

### Influence of Forests on Climate and Soil.

From an able address by Prof. A. Winchell, on "The Soils and Subsoils of Michigan," we extract the following which ought to be read by every farmer, and if necessary to keep it in memory, framed and hung up in his house. Its truths apply not only to that State, but far beyond it and are of great importance.

"The driver and most pervading agency exerted by man in the modifications of the soils of the Peninsula, is the destruction of the forests. Forests are the garments of the soil. They protect it equally from excessive cold and excessive heat, and if necessary to keep it in memory, framed and hung up in his house. Its truths apply not only to that State, but far beyond it and are of great importance.

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### Our National Bereavement.

#### JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.

BY WILLIAM CILLIES BAYARD.

Oh, deem not they are best alone  
Whom love a painful exile keeps;  
For God, who piles man's path with thorns  
Blows for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again  
That life that overcast with gloom;  
And weary hours of weeping cease  
Are promises of happy doom.

There is a day of sunny rest  
For every dark and troubled night,  
Though life's communion gifts decay  
The spirit of man, he goes to die.

Not let the good man's trust decay  
Though life's communion gifts decay  
The spirit of man, he goes to die.  
The spirit of man, he goes to die.

For God hath marked each sorrowing day  
And numbered every secret tear,  
And heaven's long arm of love shall pay  
For all his children's suffer here.

#### SERMON.

BY REV. HENRY W. BROWN,  
Pastor of Christ Church, Augusta,  
Preached April 16th, 1865.

#### On the Death of President Lincoln.

"He saved others; himself he cannot save."—Mat. xxvii: 42.

"He is not here; for he has risen."—xxviii: 6.

DEAR FRIENDS: I was expecting to speak to you to-day of the Convention of our State Convention, which I attended lately as your pastor. But on my way to you yesterday the terrible tidings of our national calamity overtook me and overwhelmed me. I can think of nothing else; I can speak of nothing else. I tried on my way to you, to think soberly, to think thoughtfully; and I will try to speak so: to try to tell you the thoughts that have come into my mind, and to try to comfort you, and myself, who need it as much as you, by looking at our sorrow with you; taking hold of hands and bearing it together; getting more out of the thing together, than from the thing thought, perhaps; being lifted up rather by the spirit of utterance, than by any words actually said.

Similar in kind are the effects on our gravely hindered. It is not cropping that deteriorates their life, so much as the constant and unceasing in transporting the alluvial particles to lower level.

Such results should be foreseen and provided against. It should at least be required that all planted trees, which will eventually restore the surface to its primitive condition, and compensate, to some extent, for the fearful destruction of the primitive forest. If this material is overlooked, the result will be the loss of some of the older countries of Europe—fields washed away, villages destroyed, population on the wane, and authorities anxious about the diminishing revenues."

#### Preparing the Soil for Crops.

Advantage should be taken to stir the plow as early as the soil will admit. The deep winter's snow left on the ground free from frost, and in places where the water has run off, the soil will be in condition to work sooner than on heavy soils that are wet. By plowing dry portions of the field first, considerable time will be gained, so that when the wetter portions are ready to be plowed, the whole field will be in condition to be plowed at one time. Heavy soils should not be plowed when wet, because they bake, and the clods can not be broken up so fast. They should be plowed when in that condition of moisture to ensure mellowness and fine tilth.

A loose, well pulverized soil allows the air to circulate freely among its particles, and the roots of plants spread out their delicate fibres drawing their sustenance from a more extended surface than on lands that are plowed in such condition as to assume a compact form. Seed sown on a hard and compact soil can not be expected to produce other than a sickly and unthrifty growth of plants. The great fault of American farming is lack of thorough pulverization and culture of the soil. We have waited till now for the land for the seed, and then upon neglecting opportunities of culture until late in the season, and then perhaps bad weather necessitates further delay or the breaking up of the land when wet and unfit to be worked.

With oats, barley, spring wheat and rye, if sowed early on properly prepared ground, the yield will generally be larger and the grain heavier than late sowing. This will be borne out by the fact, and if there are exceptions they will be due to some peculiarity of the season which is not good economy to risk. When barn yard manure has been hauled to the field during winter to be plowed under, it will be better to plow it under in the fall, than to wait till spring. It should be borne in mind that a full crop on an acre is much more profitable than half a crop on two acres. The production of crops is not the chance matter that many suppose, but depends upon conditions of culture, which are not to be ignored.—Utica Herald.

#### The Agricultural Department.

The Editor of the Prairie Farmer has been to Washington, and taken opportunity to examine carefully the organization and operations of the Agricultural Department. In an article on the subject, he comes to the following conclusions: and the temperate but earnest manner in which they are expressed, will give them the greater weight.

"We think the usefulness of the Department has already been impaired by the criticisms on the present Commissioner by the agricultural press of the country—which has often been expressed in the most unmeasured terms, and with much show of reason, that it seems as though it should have some weight with the President at Washington, if deserved. Not fully knowing the facts of the case, and wishing to do the Department no harm, we have waited till now for the opportunity of a week spent in Washington, in free intercourse with many who are familiar with the workings of the institution, among them many members of Congress, (who would demand the removal of the present Commissioner, if they thought such a demand would avail anything) and from personal observations, we have been compelled to the conclusion that the Department can and ought to have a more useful and important position in the eyes of the public, and one more acceptable to the agricultural people of the country. There is now no concert of action between the Department and the agricultural press of the country, whatever. In fact it is all antagonistic. This should not be so. The papers can live and thrive without the Department, but the Department must be worthy and have the confidence and support of the agricultural press and the people, if it is to accomplish the good it ought to accomplish, and that the public have a right to expect."

#### Salt for the Garden.

Latterly some practical men have recommended the application of salt to gardens, either in autumn after the crops have been removed, or in the spring before











